

## Message Text

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ACTION PRS-01

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 PM-04 EUR-12 INR-07 /040 W  
-----211541Z 044553 /44

R 211249Z APR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2873  
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE  
AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST  
AMDMBASSY MOSCOW 3276  
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE  
AMEMBASSY SOFIA  
AMEMBASSY WARSAW  
USMISSION BERLIN UNN  
AMCONSUL MUNICH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BUCHAREST 2929

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, SOPH, XH, RO  
SUBJECT: ROMANIAN RFE EVALUATION REPORT

REF: A. STATE 51717; B. 76 BUCHAREST 1851; C. 76 BUCHAREST 5917

1. SUMMARY. THIS IS THE EMBASSY THIRD RFE EVALUATION REPORT. SINCE OUR GENERAL VIEWS AND SUGGESTIONS ON RFE BROADCASTING HAVE BEEN RECORDED IN REFTELS AND DURING FREQUENT VISITS TO RFE IN MUNICH BY EMBASSY OFFICERS, WE WOULD LIKE TO USE BULK OF THIS REPORT TO DISCUSS RFE'S HANDLING OF A RELATIVELY NEW PROBLEM FOR ROMANIA, I.E. THE EMERGENCE OF PUBLIC DISSIDENCE. IN SPITE OF THE RECENT SWITCH TO HARD LINE TACTICS BY THE GOR, WE BELIEVE THE PROBLEM IS LIKELY TO BE BOTH AN ENDURING AND AN IMPORTANT ONE, WITH SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR U.S.-ROMANIAN BILATERAL RELATIONS. THERE, RFE'S IMPACT ON THE SITUATION MERITS PARTICULAR ATTENTION.  
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WE WOULD LIKE TO SUGGEST THE FORMULATION OF ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM. WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO COMMEND RFE'S IMAGINATIVE AND FULL COVERAGE OF THE MARCH 4 EARTHQUAKE. END SUMMARY.

2. RFE AND ROMANIAN DISSIDENTS. ROMANIA'S LEADING DISSIDENT, AUTHOR PAUL GOMA, HAS PUBLICLY CALLED RFE

HIS SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT SOURCE OF INFORMATION, A VIEW WITH WHICH THE EMBASSY AGREES. WE HAVE GREATLY APPRECIATED THE EFFORTS MADE BZGAMCONGEN MUNICH AND RFE TO CORROBORATE THE ACCURACY OF INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES, SOMETIMES NOT ALWAYS RELIABLE. WE ALSO APPRECIATE THE DILEMMA OCCASIONALLY POSED BETWEEN THE MEDIA DEMANDS FOR SPEED AND FOR ACCURACY, ALTHOUGH WE BELIEVE THE LATTER TO BE THE MOST IMPORTANT, PARTICULARLY WHEN BROADCASTS ARE MONITORED BY A HOSTILE GOVERNMENT IN SEARCH OF FACTUAL OR OTHER LAPSES WITH WHICH TO SUPPORT ITS CRITICISM OF RFE AND OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WHICH SPONSORS RFE.

3. IT HAS NOT BEEN THE FACTUAL CONTENT OF RFE'S BROADCASTING ON THIS SUBJECT WHICH HAS CAUSED US SOME RECENT CONCERN. RATHER, IT HAS BEEN THE SATURATION COVERAGE GIVEN TO THIS STILL FRAGILE PHENOMENON, AS WELL AS THE QUESTIONABLE NATURE OF SOME OF THE INFORMATION BROADCAST. FOR EXAMPLE:  
---THE MARCH 31 AND APRIL 4 BROADCASTING OF GOMA'S HOME ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER, WHICH PUTS RFE INTO A POSITION WHICH COULD BE AND HAS BEEN CONSTRUED AS ATTEMPTING TO RECRUIT THE INTERNAL OPPOSITION;  
---THE BROADCASTING OF NUMEROUS LETTERS OF SUPPORT FOR GOMA, COMPLETE WITH NAMES AND ADDRESSES IN SOME CASES. WE WONDER IF ALL OF THESE PEOPLE HAVE AUTHORIZED RFE TO BROADCAST THE CONTENTS OF THE LETTERS. EVEN IF SO, WE QUESTION THE WISDOM OF DOING THIS, GIVEN THE EVER PRESENT POSSIBILITY OF CHANGE OF TACTICS. WE  
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ARE NOT CONVINCED THAT EXTENSIVE PUBLICITY IS ALWAYS HELPFUL TO THE DISSIDENT CAUSE IN ROMANIA;  
---ALSO IN THIS REGARD, AS NOTED IN THE RFE POLICY PROGRAM GUIDELINES, WE WOULD LIKE TO STRESS THE NEED FOR THE CONTENTS OF SUCH LETTERS TO BE CAREFULLY SCRUTINIZED PRIOR TO THEIR BROADCAST USE. EVEN SOME OF GOMA'S LETTERS, E.G. HIS ORIGINAL LETTER TO PAVEL KOHOUT BROADCAST ON FEBRUARY 28, CONTAIN LANGUAGE, IN THIS CASE REFERRING TO CEAUSESCU, WHICH IS CONTRARY TO THE GUIDELINES.  
---THE PUBLICITY ACCORDED TO ALMOST ANYONE WHO SIGNED GOMA'S DOCUMENT, FOR WHATEVER REASON, E.G. THE MARCH 15 DOMESTIC BLOCK INTERVIEW WITH NICOLAE BEDIVAN, AND INDIVIDUAL WHOSE PREOCCUPATION WITH HIS NOT HAVING BEEN ALLOWED TO MAKE USE OF A LOTTERY PRIZE APPEARS GREATER THAN HIS CONCERN FOR THE PRINCIPLES ONE ASSOCIATES WITH GOMA AND MANY OF THE OTHER DISSIDENTS;  
---THE TENDENCY TO FOCUS TOO MUCH ON THE PERSON OF GOMA RATHER THAN ON THE PRINCIPLES FOR WHICH HE STANDS.

WE BELIEVE THIS APPROACH SHOULD BE AVOIDED TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE SINCE THERE EXIST OTHER POCKETS OF DISSENT AND DISSATISFACTION IN ROMANIA WHO PERHAPS AGREE WITH GOMA'S OBJECTIVES, BUT PREFER OTHER MEANS OF ACHIEVING THEM. WHILE GOMA'S IS CLEARLY THE MOST PUBLICIZED AND OPEN GROUP OF DISSIDENTS IN ROMANIAN SOCIETY TODAY, IT IS NOT THE ONLY ONE, AND PERHAPS IN THE LONG RUN MAY NOT BE THE MOST IMPORTANT.

4. WE ARE CONCERNED WHEN THE VAST MAJORITY OF RFE INTERNAL COVERAGE CONSISTS OF NEGATIVE COMMENTARY ON TWO ISSUES, DISSIDENTS AND EMIGRATION, WITH LITTLE BALANCE OR APPRECIATION FOR OTHER ELEMENTS OF ROMANIAN POLICY, IN PARTICULAR ITS FOREIGN POLICY. WE FIND THIS DIFFICULT TO RECONCILE WITH THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF U.S. POLICY HERE, I.E. A ROMANIA RELATIVELY INDEPENDENT FROM SOVIET CONTROL.  
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5. WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE COMMENTARY SUCH AS THE FEBRUARY 25 NOEL BERNARD POLITICAL PROGRAM EDITORIAL ENTITLED "FROM MONOLOGUE TO DIALOGUE" WHICH APPLAUDED THE DECISION OF THE ROMANIAN AUTHORITIES TO PERMIT GOMA'S MEETING WITH PARTY SECRETARY CORNEL BURTICA. IN THIS WAY RFE IS SEEN AS ACTIVELY ENCOURAGING REASON AND FLEXIBILITY UPON BOTH SIDES, RATHER THAN WIDENING THE ALREADY LARGE BREACH BETWEEN THEM. EVEN IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, WE BELIEVE RFE SHOULD CONTINUE TO URGE GOR TO MODERATE ITS HARD LINE TACTICS, RATHER THAN SOLELY ATTACKING THEM. WE FOUND THE BERNARD EDITORIAL OF MARCH 26 ON "THE ALLEGED MISUSE OF MENTAL HOSPITALS" A BALANCED AND RESPONSIBLE COMMENT ON A VERY SENSITIVE SUBJECT. WE NOTE THAT THIS  
WAS PREPARED TOGETHER WITH THE RESEARCH STAFF, THE TYPE OF COOPERATION WHICH WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY URGED. WE ALSO FOUND EMIL GEORGESCU'S COMMENTARY ON A FEBRUARY 2 "SCINTEIA" EDITORIAL ON HELSINKI AND EMIGRATION WELL DONE IN THAT IT DISCUSSED THE VIEWPOINT PUT FORTH IN THE PARTY PAPER, BUT ALSO NOTED THAT IN PRACTICE THE GOR WAS CONSIDERABLY MORE LIBERAL TOWARDS FAMILY REUNIFICATION. HERE, AS IN MOST OTHER AREAS, PARTY RHETORIC DOES NOT ALWAYS REFLECT REALITY. AT PRESENT THIS IS

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ACTION PRS-01

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-----211544Z 044861 /44

R 211249Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST  
TO: RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2874  
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE  
AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE  
AMEMBASSY SOFIA  
AMEMBASSY WARSAW  
USMISSION BERLIN UNN  
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PARTICULARLY TRUE AS REGARDS GERMAN EMIGRATION WHICH THE PRESS IS CURRENTLY ATTACKING WHILE THE NUMBER OF FAMILIES ALLOWED TO DEPART HAS RECENTLY RISEN. RFE SHOULD RECOGNIZE THIS DICHOTOMY MORE OFTEN THAN IT DOES AS WELL AS THE MORE GENERAL DILEMMA, NOT CONFINED TO ROMANIA, OF MINORITIES AND MAJORITIES.

6. SOME SUGGESTED GUIDELINES. WITH ABOVE CONSIDERATIONS IN MIND, WE WOULD LIKE TO SUGGEST THE FOLLOWING SUPPLEMENTAL GUIDELINES: IN ITS BROADCASTING ON THE SUBJECT OF DISSIDENCE IN EASTERN EUROPE RFE SHOULD AVOID THE IMPRESSION THAT IT IS ACTIVELY ENCOURAGING CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE OR SERVING IN SOME WAY AS AN EXTERNAL FOCAL POINT FOR SUCH DISSIDENCE MOVEMENTS, WHICH MUST SPRING FROM DOMESTIC CONDITIONS, NOT EXTERNAL ENCOURAGEMENT. THIS SHOULD IN NO WAY LIMIT RFE'S FACTUAL COVERAGE OF THESE GROUPS, NOR ITS SUPPORT FOR THE PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN RIGHTS WHICH THEY ESPOUSE. BUT IT DOES MEAN  
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THAT RFE STRESSES BALANCE, PROPORTION, AND REAL CONCERN FOR THE WELFARE OF THOSE WHO HAVE TO COPE WITH TRYING TO MAKE A DENT ON A REGIME LIKE CEAUSESCU'S.

7. AS PART OF THE ABOVE, WE PROPOSE INSTITUTING A MORE THOROUGH PRE-BROADCAST REVIEW OF SCRIPTS DEALING WITH THIS SUBJECT, PERHAPS AT THE RFE DEPUTY DIRECTOR LEVEL, AS WELL AS A CLEAR DIRECTIVE TO THE BROADCASTING STAFF BY RFE MANAGEMENT THAT THE EXISTING GUIDELINES ARE TO BE TAKEN LITERALLY AND THAT IN CASE OF DOUBT BROADCASTERS SHOULD ERR ON THE CONSERVATIVE SIDE.

8. WE REALIZE ANYTHING THAT MIGHT SMACK OF CENSORSHIP IS AT BEST TOUCHY. BUT AT LEAST THE REST OF THIS YEAR IS ALSO GOING TO BE TOUCHY GIVEN THE BELGRADE CONTEXT. THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS NOW TOO CLOSELY IDENTIFIED ITSELF WITH RFE NOT REPEAT NOT TO TAKE MEASURES, IF ONLY IN SELF-PROTECTION, TO BE SURE THAT WHAT RFE BROADCASTS IS INDEED NOT INCONSISTENT WITH U.S. GOVERNMENT POLICY. FURTHERMORE, IF WE ARE TRULY INTERESTED IN RFE PROMOTING THE CAUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS WE OUGHT TO WORRY ALSO ABOUT EFFECTIVENESS. RFE'S HANDLING OF THE DISSIDENCE QUESTION IN LATE MARCH AND EARLY APRIL ALL TOO OFTEN REMINDED US OF THE SATURATION TECHNIQUE OF AMERICAN COMMERCIALS OR, WHAT IS WORSE, THE SATURATION APPROACH USED BY GOR MEDIA. WE BELIEVE THAT THE ROMANIAN AUDIENCE NEEDS AND WANTS TO BE TREATED AS CAPABLE OF JUDGING EVENTS. UNDERSTATEMENT BY RFE WILL FIT THIS MOOD MUCH BETTER.

9. RFE EARTHQUAKE COVERAGE. WE WOULD LIKE TO COMMEND RFE FOR ITS IMAGINATIVE AND FULL COVERAGE OF THE MARCH 4 EARTHQUAKE IN ROMANIA. NOT ONLY DID RFE BEGIN ITS INFORMATIONAL BROADCASTING ON CRISIS PRIOR TO RADIO BUCHAREST, BUT PERHAPS MORE IMPORTANTLY, BY OPENINGS

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ITS SWITCHBOARD TO CALLS FROM ROMANIANS ABROAD, IT SERVED AS CHANNEL OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION BETWEEN FAMILIES, RELATIVES AND FRIENDS. EVEN MORE SIGNIFICANT IS FACT THAT GOR ITSELF TACITLY ACKNOWLEDGED VALUE OF THIS RFE ROLE BY PERMITTING HUNDREDS OF ITS CITIZENS TO CALL MUNICH IN RESPONSE TO MESSAGES BROADCAST. RFE COVERAGE OF THE EARTHQUAKE HAS PROBABLY INCREASED ITS ALREADY WIDE LISTENERSHIP IN ROMANIA.

10. STEPPED-UP ANTI-RFE CAMPAIGN. TOGETHER WITH THE SPATE OF ANTI-WEST AND ANTI-EMIGRATION WHICH HAVE RECENTLY APPEARED IN THE ROMANIAN PRESS, THE GOR HAS ALSO REVIVED AND BROADENED ITS ATTACKS ON RFE. WITHIN THE LAST TWO WEEKS ANTI-RFE ARTICLES HAVE BEEN FEATURED IN "SCINTEIA", "ROMANIA LIBERA", "LUMEA", "LUCEAFARUL",

"ROMANIA LITERARA", "SAPTAMINA", "FLACARA", "PENTRU PATRIA" AND IN THE PROVINCIAL PRESS. IN SOME CASES THEY HAVE BEEN MORE VIOLENT THAN WHEN GOR INITIALLY LAUNCHED CAMPAIGN IN DECEMBER 1975. FOR EXAMPLE, THE MAY 1 "PENTRU PATRIA" (ORGAN OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR) CHARGES CONTINUED EXTENSIVE CIA INVOLVEMENT IN THE RADIOS AND ALSO ATTACKES BIB AS NOT CHANGING ANYTHING, CITING AS PROOF THE "NEW BIB DIRECTOR (SIC), WILLIAM GRIFFITH, ALSO A CIA MEMBER." IN ADDITION APRIL 13 "SCINTEIA" ARTICLE DESCRIBES A FACTORY MEETING ORGANIZED TO BERATE AND CRITICIZE A 50-YEAR OLD WORKER WHOSE CRIME WAS HAVING WRITTEN TO RFE. MORE OMINOUSLY, IT APPEARS AS IF ROMANIAN AUTHORITIES MAY BE ATTEMPTING TO BUILD A CASE WHICH WOULD LIKE DISSIDENT BAPTIST ACTIVISTS WITH RFE (BUCHAREST 2803). WE ASSUME THAT STEPPED-UP CAMPAIGN IS IN RESPONSE TO RFE'S INCREASED AUDIENCE STANDING, AS WELL AS GOR FEARS OF RFE INVOLVEMENT WITH SPREADING DISSIDENCE. IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES IT IS ALL THE MORE NECESSARY FOR RFE TO SCRUPULOUSLY OBSERVE ITS OWN BROADCAST CONFIDENTIAL

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GUIDELINES.

11. WE ASK FOR DEPARTMENT'S EARLY COMMENTS ON OUR SUGGESTED GUIDELINES AND ON PLANS TO DISCUSS THEM WITH BIB.  
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## Message Attributes

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